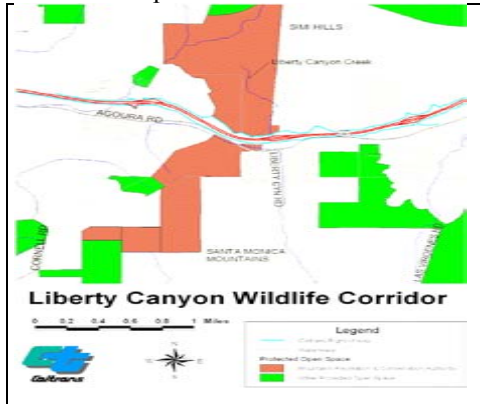


## PROJECT TITLE

### [LA 101 Wildlife Corridor Enhancements at Liberty Canyon]

Insert Location Map Below:



Project EA:24680

PPNO:3551

**Project Location:** Interstate 101 at Liberty Canyon Road in the City of Agoura in Los Angeles County. The project is located adjacent to Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC) land.

**Co/Rte/KP/PM:** LA/101/PM 32.8

**Project Description:** The proposed enhancement project would construct a corridor tunnel under the freeway connecting the two SMMC properties to one another. It would also create ample room for wildlife to cross adjacent to the Right of Way fencing.

**Project Scope:** The tunnel would be at least eight feet in height. The

fenceline will be moved further up the slope in order to provide more habitat for wildlife movement.

**Existing Funding:** IIP: \$1,033,000  
RIP: \$0  
Other: \$0

**Future Funding Need:** \$0

**Total Estimated Cost:** \$1,033,000

**Project Schedule:** June 2004 – June 2008

## PROJECT INFORMATION

**Background:** Los Angeles County is a heavily populated area, which has both urban and undeveloped terrain. U.S. 101 runs through some of the most heavily populated urban areas as well as public parklands and mountains. The Santa Monica Mountains are located to the south of the freeway and the Simi Hills are located to the north. The Simi Hills then connect to the Santa Susana Mountains, which then connect to Los Padres National Forest and the San Gabriel Mountains. The last remaining protected open space of this largely developed area exists in the vicinity of Liberty Canyon Road in the City of Agoura, thus creating a chokepoint for wildlife connectivity.

**Project Need:** Without connectivity between the ranges, the Santa Monica Mountains are in danger of becoming virtually isolated from other large undeveloped tracts of land. This fragmentation could result in the area being unable to sustain healthy populations of larger mammals with large territories. Some of the wildlife threatened by the limited connectivity includes bobcat, mountain lion, coyote and mule deer.

**Project Purpose:** The National Park Service and the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy have recently acquired land adjacent to the freeway on both sides in order to protect connectivity in this area adjacent to U.S. 101. Current vegetative restoration efforts conducted by other entities are in the planning stages at Liberty Canyon Creek. In addition, coordination with the City of Agoura has taken place in order to limit development in the area adjacent to Liberty Canyon Creek. Creating an easily accessible wildlife crossing under U.S. 101 at this choke point of the freeway would facilitate wildlife movement and provide more connected habitat, which will result in more genetic diversity and a healthier wildlife population. Without a viable wildlife crossing at the U.S. 101 near Liberty Canyon Road, wildlife linkages will not exist and the Santa Monica Mountains will continue to be fragmented from the surrounding undeveloped regions.

Creating a wildlife crossing under U.S. 101 would provide an alternate route for animals to cross the freeway. This crossing would promote connectivity between the Santa Monica Mountains and the Simi Hills as well. In addition, fencing would be installed leading wildlife to the crossing instead of to the traveled lanes of the freeway. The fence line would be moved toward the mainline of the freeway in order to create more usable habitat in the corridor on the southbound freeway off-ramp at the Liberty Canyon Interchange. Currently, wildlife are moving through this area and have been known to get caught behind the existing row fence when trying to access the adjacent conservancy land south of the freeway. Re-vegetation activities, along with the installation of grating at the on- and off-ramp locations may also restrict wildlife access to the freeway main line and encourage wildlife to use the newly fenced route.